

Supervisors Must Be Safety Role Models for Workers



One of the roles of supervisors is to help train new workers on how to safely perform the tasks required by their jobs. So it's crucial that supervisors set a good example by following safety rules and using best practices. Unfortunately, a supervisor in Australia not only set a bad example for a new hire he was training but also lost two fingers as a result.

A supervisor for a [building products manufacturer in Perth, Australia](#) was showing a new worker how to use a flywheel press. The supervisor, who had 20 years' experience and was a safety and health representative, was well aware of the need to ensure machine guards were in place and keep hands away from moving parts. But he raised the finger guards on the press and reached in to try to clear a piece of metal.

Because of a misunderstanding, the worker depressed the foot pedal while the supervisor's hand was in the press. The ram came down, trapping his hand and amputating his index and middle fingers. (The lesson: [Workers'and supervisors'shouldn't remove machine guards](#), which are specifically designed to protect them.)

The Industrial Progress Corporation, which operates asRoofmartWA, pleaded guilty to failing to provide and maintain a safe workplace and causing serious harm to a worker. The court fined it \$45,000 Australian.

Help Supervisors Be Safety Role Models

Supervisors are a key component of your OHS program. Great supervisors can go a long way towards making the workplace safer, while poor supervisors can undercut your safety measures, endanger workers and expose the company to liability.

Thus, employers should help supervisors succeed in their positions and be safety role models for all workers. The OHS Insider's [Supervisor Compliance Centre](#) can help you do so by:

- Explaining [what the OHS laws require supervisors to do](#)
- Providing [7 lessons on supervisors and due diligence](#)
- Helping you identify [who can be considered a supervisor under the OHS law](#)
- Spelling out the [training requirements for supervisors](#).

The Centre also includes tools such as:

- A [Supervisor Competency Checklist](#)
- A [briefing](#) you can give supervisors to reinforce their awareness of their safety duties.

And at [Safety Smart](#), you'll find safety talks, videos, articles and e-learning courses on many topics to help supervisors do their jobs well. Not a subscriber to SafetySmart? Sign up for a [free trial](#).